DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 362 854 CS 011 450

AUTHOR	Hoffman, James V.; And Others
TITLE	So What's New in the New Basals? A Focus on First Grade. Reading Research Report No. 6.
INSTITUTION	National Reading Research Center, Athens, GA.; National Reading Research Center, College Park, MD.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	93
CONTRACT	117A20007
NOTE	38p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research/Technical (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Basal Reading; Comparative Analysis; *Grade 1; Primary Education; Readability; *Reading Materials; Reading Research; Textbook Content; Textbook Evaluation; Text Structure; Whole Language Approach

ABSTRACT

A study examined the first grade materials in five new basal programs submitted for the 1993 Texas state adoption. (The programs were those of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; Houghton Mifflin; Scott Foresman; Macmillan/McGraw-Hill; and Silver Burdett Ginn). These series are compared with program materials currently in use in the state. The analysis focuses on features of the pupil texts (e.g., total number of words, number of unique words, readability levels, literary quality) and features of the teachers' editions (e.g., program design, organization, tone). Results of the analysis indicate substantial changes in the more recent series. The findings are interpreted in terms of historical trends as well as recent developments in the literature-based and whole language movements. Implications for future research are identified that relate to the study of the implementation and effects of these new programs. (Seven tables of data and a list of the instructional materials studied, are included. Appendixes contain the rating scales and a list rating exemplar texts. Contains 42 references.) (Author/RS)

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The work reported herein was funded by the National Reading Research Center of the University of Georgia and University of Maryland. It was supported under the Educational Research and Development Centers Program (PR/AWARD NO. 117A20007) as administered by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education. The findings and opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the position or policies of the National Reading Research Center, the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, or the U.S. Department of Education.

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The National Reading Research Center (NRRC) is funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the U.S. Department of Education to conduct research on reading and reading instruction. The NRRC is operated by a consortium of the University of Georgia and the University of Maryland College Park in collaboration with researchers at several institutions nationwide.

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National Reading Research Center
Universities of Georgia and Maryland
Reading Research Report No. 6
Fall 1993

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Abstract. The authors examine the first grade materials in five new basal programs submitted for the 1993 Texas state adoption. These series are compared with program materials currently in use in the state (Copyright 1986/1987). The analysis focuses on features of the pupil texts (e.g., total number of words, number of unique words, readability levels, literary quality) and features of the teachers' editions (e.g., program design, organization, tone). Results of the analysis indicate substantial changes in the more recent series. The findings are interpreted in terms of historical trends as well as recent developments in the literature-based and whole language movements. Implications for future research are identified that relate to the study of the implementation and effects of these new programs.

Publishers of educational materials have played a significant role in American reading instruction since the early seventeenth century (Smith, 1965). The days of a single dominant material/program like Webster's "blue back" speller or McGuffey's readers are gone. Also gone are the days when a multitude of programs competed equally in the market place (e.g., Smith reports on seventeen "new" programs in the period 1925-1935 — a *decrease* from the previous period). Today, we find the national market dominated by just five or six basal programs. The shrinking number of competitors is not surprising given the current costs of developing a single new program — conservatively estimated at more than forty million dollars (Goodman, 1989). The competition among publishers for a share of the estimated four hundred million dollar annual market sales (Goodman, 1989) is incredibly intense. To remain viable, these publishers must anticipate changes in teaching practices; they must walk the fine line between offering a product so new and different that it appeals only to high risk takers and one so traditional that it is viewed as outdated. In the past, most successful publishers have played it safe by taking a rather conservative stance toward change. Those who have examined the history of basal readers note publishers' resistance to innovation (e.g.,

Chall, 1983; Venezky, 1987; Shannon, 1989). Basal systems have been a strong force in sustaining the status quo by offering teachers materials that encourage them to continue to do what traditional teachers have done in the past with only the slightest modifications. A "skills-based" teaching philosophy for beginning reading instruction has thus been preserved and passed from one generation to the next.

This conservative stance may be a thing of the past. Recent changes in the market place have driven publishers to take a rather different approach toward product development. Classroom teachers are demanding more relevant and more authentic teaching resources (Hansen, Newkirk, & Graves, 1985; Jensen, 1989; Martin, 1991), and a larger role in making decisions about reading/language arts instruction in their own classrooms (Duffy, 1991). This movement toward empowered teaching is rooted in dissatisfaction with policies, assessment tools, and textbooks that "de-skill" teachers, rationalize instruction, and discourage teachers from being responsible for choosing appropriate texts and instruction for their learners (Apple & Smith, 1991; Maeroff, 1988; Shannon, 1989).

Leaders at the state and national levels are working (individually, within professional organizations, and within the education bureaucracy itself) to effect changes in reading/language arts instruction through policy initiatives. They seek to create an educational context that will empower teachers and promote innovative programming. As the context changes, so does the market place. The California Language Arts Framework (Honig, 1988), for example, is designed to integrate reading and writing using literature, and calls for increased teacher decision making about instruction. Policy initiatives in other states like Michigan (Wixson & Peters, 1984, 1987) and Pennsylvania (Lytle & Botel, 1988) have similar ends.

The expanding research base for instruction that challenges traditional practice has also contributed to a changing market place. The professional literature is filled with calls for more integrated language arts instruction (Harste & Short, 1991; Power & Hubbard, 1991; Routman, 1988), for more attention to and understanding of developmental issues and processes (Sulzby & Barnhart, 1992), for greater recognition and appreciation of the place of quality literature in the instructional program (Galda, Cullinan, & Strickland, 1993), and for instruction that builds on the concept of learning as a socially situated and constructive process (Hiebert, 1991). The professional literature has been critical of basal readers for their low interest, contrived language, and controlled vocabulary, and for their inclusion of insipid stories lacking in conflict, character development, or authentic situations (Goodman, Shannon, Freeman, & Murphy, 1988).

How have publishers of basal programs responded to these changes? In this report, we offer an analysis of the new basal reading programs (i.e., those that bear a 1993 copyright date) with a particular focus on the beginning levels (i.e., the first grade systems).[2] Our goal is to document points of difference and similarity between these new programs and those from the recent past.

The Texas Context

Because of its large population and its status as one of the major textbook adoption states, the influence that the state of Texas exerts on educational publishing is legendary (Bowler, 1978; Farr, Tulley, & Powell, 1987). It is no coincidence that five of the largest publishers of basal reading programs all introduced new programs in 1993. The precipitating event was the release of the 1990 Texas state textbook proclamation. In Texas, new texts for students in all of the major curriculum areas are provided free to students in districts across the state on a regular cycle, usually every five to seven years. To qualify for the free textbooks, the districts must choose from among the books that have been approved for adoption by the Texas State Board of Education. The textbook adoption cycle actually begins with the writing of a textbook proclamation. The textbook proclamation specifies for publishers the required and desired features of the books that will be considered for adoption. The proclamation is issued over a year in advance of the final review by the state board. In the past, the textbook proclamation was written by the staff at the Texas Education Agency. For the most recent basal adoption, the state board established a new process. A committee comprised of professional educators from across the state was responsible for writing the proclamation.

In some ways, the most recent proclamation for basals was similar to those of the past. The programs were required to offer a design considerate of the Texas Essential Elements (TEE), a state-adopted curricular framework. For instance, the essential elements for first grade reading include using word attack skills and developing literary appreciation skills. These goals are further delineated into specific objectives such as the "use of basic phonics: initial, medial, and final consonants" and the provision of opportunities to "appreciate repetition, rhyme, and alliteration." The new programs had to be tailored to those elements as well as offer a design that reflected the components of the statewide assessment plan, the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), which contains a fairly traditional assessment of reading skills.

In other ways, though, the 1990 Proclamation was radically different from previous proclamations. The 1990 Proclamation states that the programs "shall be based on the model of reading that views reading as an interactive and constructive process during which the reader uses several sources of information simultaneously" (Proclamation, 1990, p. 51). Programs submitted for consideration were required to provide: (a) opportunities to read connected text rather than isolated workbooks; (b) a "pluralistic anthology of quality children's literature, balanced in its inclusion of fiction and nonfiction selections by authors representing various ethnic/racial groups and of selections representing various sex roles and groups of students"; (c) unabridged literature; and opportunities for (d) reading practice; for (e) integrating reading with listening, speaking, and writing; and for (f) systematic and sequential presentation/development of phonemic and phonological awareness abilities, etc. (Proclamation, 1990, p. 52). The 1990 Proclamation, then, directed publishers to present materials

based on a newer model of reading that provided opportunities for skills practice, yet required the use of children's literature.

Five programs with 1993 publication dates were submitted, all of which were subsequently approved by the Texas State Board of Education as meeting the terms set forth in the proclamation. These were: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Houghton Mifflin, Macmillan/-McGraw-Hill, Scott Foresman, and Silver Burdett Ginn. Adoption decisions by school districts were made during the 1992-93 academic year. Programs are to be in place by the fall of 1993, replacing the old (1986/87) basal programs. It is important to note that while the 1993 programs have been developed with the Texas proclamation in mind, it is likely that they will be marketed nationally by all of the publishers for the next several years.

Program Analysis

Our comparative analysis focuses on the differences between the new (1993) versions and the old (1986/87) series.[3] Four of the five publishers are represented in both the new and old series (ignoring assorted corporate mergers and acquisitions). Only one of the new series (i.e., the Silver Burdett Ginn program) did not have an old (1986/87) program counterpart in Texas. The programs contain many different components or materials (e.g., pupil editions, teacher editions, journals, workbooks, practice readers). Since the 1990 Proclamation is quite specific regarding the features of the pupil editions and the accompanying teachers' materials, we decided to focus our analysis on the pupil texts and the teachers' editions, not on the ancillary materials.

THE PUPIL TEXTS

While each of the four 1986/87 versions of these programs consisted of five clearly identified pupil texts, the pupil texts for the five 1993 versions are more diverse in terms of their organizational patterns. The 1990 Texas textbook proclamation mandated a minimum of six levels in the first grade program (or "learning system"), so all of the 1993 programs contain six levels. While in two programs the levels consist exclusively of anthologies; in three programs the levels consist of various combinations of anthologies and trade books. In other words, all five programs included pupil texts in anthology form, but three programs included trade books either as levels in the program or as complements to the anthologies. In determining what to analyze we relied heavily on the state bid materials, treating as part of the pupil reading texts anything the publisher agreed to provide to each first grade pupil. Thus, a collection of trade books that would be part of a classroom library or a read-aloud collection was not included in the analysis. However, those trade book titles to be provided to every pupil were included. As an addition to our analysis, we also examined the first grade programs considering the anthologies only — that is, excluding the trade books.

The pupil texts were analyzed according to (a) word/sentence level, (b) literature characteristics, (c) qualitative features, (d) predict-

ability, and (e) decodability. We describe and report on these analyses separately.

Word and Sentence Level Analysis

Readability formulas (e.g., Bormuth, 1969; Flesch, 1948) were developed to characterize reading difficulty for students of various ages and have often been used to analyze basal texts. These formulas usually include number of syllables per word, word length, and sentence length as important factors contributing to readability (Klare, 1984). In the past, publishers have used these formulas to validate the level of difficulty of their program materials. Although they have been criticized for their simplicity (Kintsch, 1979) and lack of concern for concept load (Wepner & Feeley, 1993), we have chosen to include readability formulas in this analysis because of their historical interest.

To examine word and sentence length, all of the entries from each of the first grade pupil texts were loaded onto a computer in separate text files. An entry was defined as any segment of text that was to be read by the student, except skills activities, questions, previews, other activities, and author information. (In a few uncertain cases, the table of contents was used to make this determination). The individual text files were then combined into larger units to obtain cumulative scores for levels and programs. These files were analyzed using the RightWriter (1990) software package, which produced the following:

(a) a readability score (using a combination of the Flesch-Kinkaid, the Flesch, and the Fog indices);

(b) a list of total number of words and total number of different words;

(c) a calculation of the average number of syllables per word and average number of words per sentence.

The results of this analysis are presented in Table 1. These data are reported as averages and as ranges. Data from both the anthology only and the anthology plus trade books analyses are presented. The total number of words in the new programs is (on the average) considerably less than in the old programs. However, the range within the new programs, in contrast to the old, is quite wide. For example, when the trade books are included in the analysis, one of the new programs actually exceeds all of the old programs in total number of words. At the other extreme, one of the new programs has almost 50% fewer words than the average in the old series. A caution in interpreting these data: We did not take any features of the instructional design into consideration in this analysis. As we discuss later, the new programs call for multiple (re)readings of stories to a far greater degree than the older programs. When this design feature is considered, the total number of words students will read may actually be greater in the new programs than in the old.

When compared with the old series, the new series show a decrease in total number of words, but an increase in the total number of unique (different) words. Although there is a far wider range of unique words in the new series, not one of the new series uses fewer unique words than any of the old. In compar-

ing the number of unique words to the total number of words, we see evidence that vocabulary control and repetition (in the traditional basal sense) have been significantly reduced in the new programs. This finding appears to reverse a more than sixty year trend toward reducing the amount of new vocabulary introduced to children (Trace, 1965; Chall, 1983). Overall, there is an increase in the average number of syllables per word in the newer series, and there is a substantial increase in the average number of words per sentence. By traditional measures of readability, the books in the new series are substantially more difficult than those in the old.

Literature Characteristics

Because the 1990 Texas Proclamation called for the use of children's literature, we examined the following features of the literature included in the programs: (a) sources and adaptations; (b) literary genre; (c) add-ons, which are materials intended to support or extend work with the reading selections.

In examining the literature in terms of its sources and adaptations, we found that more than 80% of the selections at the first grade level included in the old (1986/87) series were written by the basal publishers. Most of what was drawn from children's trade literature was extensively adapted. In the case of both the original and adapted literature, the publishers' primary concern appears to have been an effort to control the introduction and repetition of vocabulary. In the new (1993) series practically all of the selections were drawn from published literature. Across the five series, most authors were represented by one or two selections, but a few were represented by three or more stories.

Generally, the language and content of this literature showed minimal adaptation. However, there were a few exceptions, such as the omission of the ending of *Chick a Chick a Boom Boom* in Silver Burdett Ginn's *Morning Bells*. Sometimes the design was modified. For example, the original trade version of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle contains holes through which children can put their fingers; this feature is absent from the version appearing in Houghton Mifflin's *Me, Myself and I*. The version of *Baby Rattlesnake* presented in Houghton Mifflin's *Bookworm* omitted at least one illustration that had appeared in the original. In some series, new borders and designs were often used as background for the original artwork (see, for example, *Mr. Rabbit and the Lovely Present* in Macmillan/-McGraw-Hill's *The Very Thing*).

To examine adaptations systematically, we looked at selections used most often in the five series and compared the versions appearing in the basals with the original trade books. The selections studied (with total number of appearances across the five series) included: *Baby Rattlesnake* by Te Ata (3); *The Gunnywolf* by A. Delaney (3); and *My Friends* by Taro Gomi (3). We found no significant differences in language between the original versions and those used in the basal programs. Some changes in design were noticeable (e.g., illustrations were reduced in size and/or repositioned and borders were inserted).

To examine the range of literature included, each selection appearing in each series was

Table 1. Word/Sentence Level Analysis

	1986/87 Programs	1993 Programs (without trade books)	1993 Programs (with trade books)
	$\bar{X}$ (Range)	$\bar{X}$ (Range)	$\bar{X}$ (Range)
Total Number of Words	17,319 (16,865–17,282)	12,265 (6,629–17,102)	14,272 (9,569–22,728)
Number of Unique Words	962 (847–1,051)	1,680 (1,171–2,238)	1,834 (1,536–2,458)
Readability	1.00 (1.00–1.00)	1.69 (1.28–2.14)	1.52 (1.22–1.96)
Syllables/Word	1.117 (1.071–1.135)	1.20 (1.19–1.22)	1.195 (1.177–1.215)
Words/Sentence	6.8 (6.5–6.9)	7.8 (7.2–8.4)	7.7 (7.2–8.2)

classified by literary genre using a scheme proposed by Lukens (1990). In this scheme, literature is categorized as (a) realism, (b) fantasy, (c) traditional tales, (d) rhyme to poetry, or (e) nonfiction. These data are presented in Table 2. The most dramatic change from the 1986/87 versions to the 1993 ones is the inclusion of more poetry in the newer series. Poetry here is broadly defined and includes forms of children's literature that may or may not use rhyme, but do use imagery and figurative language. Thus, predictable picture books (in their trade book forms) like *Together* by Lyon (in Macmillan/McGrawHill's *Books! Books! Books!*) have been included in the poetry category.

We next examined material included in the pupil texts that was designed to support or extend work with the reading selections. We refer to these as *add-ons*. Pre-selection add-ons often included questions or instructions for students to find out something in particular from the story. Post-selection add-ons included comprehension questions, directions to use words from the story in sentences, or writing activities. Author information (whether pre- or post-selection) provided details about the authors' lives or reasons for writing the story.

Our analysis revealed a dramatic decrease in the amount of pre- and post-selection material from the old series to the new (see Table 3). The only clear exception to this pattern was an increase in the number of entries providing author/illustrator information. There were some clear differences in the focus of these added materials (see Table 4). For

Table 2. Literary Genre - Broad Categories

	1986/87 Programs		1993 Programs	
Literary Genre	**%**	**(Number)**	**%**	**(Number)**
Realistic Stories	36	(103)	15	(67)
Fantasy	31	(90)	17	(74)
Traditional Tales	5	(14)	6	(25)
Rhyme to Poetry	17	(50)	50	(216)
Non-Fiction	12	(34)	12	(52)
	Total	(291)	Total	(434)

Table 3. Add-ons (Pre-Selection, Post-Selection, and Author Information)

	1986/87 Programs		1993 Programs	
	%	**(Number)**	**%**	**(Number)**
Pre-Selection	17	(48)	6	(48)
Post-Selection	70	(133)	24	(103)
Author Information	1	(3)	23	(102)

Table 4. Specific Points of Contrast in Pre-Selection and Post-Selection Entries

	1986/87 Programs		1993 Programs	
	%	**(Number)**	**%**	**(Number)**
Pre-Selection				
Preview	12	(35)	0	(2)
Post-Selection				
Skills/Activities	15	(43)	0	(0)
Questions	24	(71)	11	(50)
Library/Trade Connections	1	(4)	4	(16)

example, skills/activity pages and selection previews were reduced to zero in the new programs.

Qualitative Features

We approached the issue of literary quality from an engagement perspective. The engagement perspective (Alvermann & Guthrie, 1993) argues that engaged readers read for a variety of purposes, including enjoyment, gaining knowledge, interpreting an author's meaning, performing a particular task, and taking social and political action. We attempted to answer the question: How engaging is this text? We considered engagement across multiple dimensions: intellectual, social/cultural, affective, aesthetic, and linguistic. In evaluating each selection for its engagement properties, we assumed the audience to be first grade readers — readers with diverse social, ethnic, and cultural experiences. Each selection in each series was rated on a holistic scale of engagement ranging from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) and on three analytic scales: content (e.g., ideas, themes, social relevance, character development, storyline); language (e.g., metaphor, rhyme, syntax, vocabulary); and design (e.g., illustrations, layout, color). Narrative descriptions for the characteristics of each point of the scales (holistic and analytic) were developed.[4] Here again a 5-point scale was used to rate each selection. (See Appendix A for detailed descriptions of the rating scales.) Anchor texts for each point on the content, language, and design scales were also identified by two researchers who rated the exemplars independently and then discussed their features. These texts were identified in an interactive manner by applying the scales to the exemplar texts and then refining the scales in accordance with features of the exemplars. (See Appendix B).

The text rating was conducted by the ten members of the research team. Each text was rated independently by at least two members, using the narrative descriptions and the anchor selections as guides. Although raters were not blind to the series they were rating, bias was reduced by having individual raters sample from several different series both new and old. Ratings were compared and, if necessary, negotiated. Differences of 1 point on the rating scale were averaged. Thus, a selection receiving a rating of 2 on design by one reviewer and a rating of 3 by the other reviewer would receive a final score of 2.5. When the discrepancy was greater than one point, the two reviewers negotiated. If the two reviewers were unable to achieve a consensus rating, a third reviewer arbitrated. Agreement on independent ratings (exact agreement or only minor [1 point] disagreements) was more than 92%. The ratings on the remaining 8% were negotiated by the two reviewers. In only two instances was an arbitrator needed to resolve differences between reviewers.

The results of the engagement analysis are presented in Table 5. The scores are consistently and substantially higher for the new series, both for the holistic scale and for all three analytic scales.

As indicated by the content ratings, the selections from the new basals appear to have more complex plots and character development and to require more interpretation on the part of the reader than the old. The language of the

Table 5. Qualitative Features (Anthology + Trade Books)

	Pages	Holistic	Content	Language	Design
1986/87 Programs (N=291 Entries)					
$\bar{X}$	6.9	2.0	1.94	1.93	2.39
(SD)	(3.6)	(.82)	(.77)	(.83)	(.65)
Range	1–26	1–4.5	1–4.5	1–4.5	1–5
1993 Programs (N=436 Entries)					
$\bar{X}$	11.0	3.2	2.9	3.1	3.2
(SD)	(10.5)	(.81)	(.76)	(.76)	(.88)
Range	1–40	1–5	1–5	1–5	1–5

new series appears to be more colloquial and idiomatic, making more use of metaphor and imagery. Use of color, form, line, and design techniques were more evident on the average in the new basals than in the old. Overall, the new basals are more engaging than the old. However, with average ratings around 3, the pieces in the new basals are not necessarily highly engaging.

Predictability

We examined two additional characteristics of the stories: predictability and decodability. The predictable features of the text were analyzed using a features analysis and a holistic rating scheme. Using the qualities of predictability adapted from Rhodes (1981), we rated each selection on nine features: (a) repeated pattern (e.g., "Brown Bear, Brown Bear"); (b) familiar concepts (e.g., bees sting); (c) good match between text and illustrations that cues vocabulary; (d) rhyme; (e) rhythm; (f) alliteration (e.g., baby buggy bumper); (g) cumulative pattern (e.g., There was an old lady who swallowed a fly); (h) familiar song/story (e.g., *The Little Red Hen*); and (i) familiar sequence (e.g., days of the week). Each of these features has the potential to make the words of a text more predictable to children as they read for meaning. We used a yes/no dichotomy with *yes* indicating the feature was clearly present and used consistently and *no* indicating it was absent.

This specific features analysis was supported by a holistic 5-point scale (See Appendix A), with 1 for low predictability and 5 for high. Texts with more predictable features were rated higher than those with fewer features, although occasionally the strength of one

Table 6. Predictable Text Features

	1986/87 Programs		1993 Programs	
	%	(Number)	%	(Number)
Repeated Pattern	18.2	(53)	51.8	(226)
Familiar Concepts	8	(23)	27.75	(121)
Good Match of Illustrations and Text	21	(62)	44	(191)
Rhyme	18	(53)	49.5	(216)
Rhythm	18.6	(54)	62	(270)
Alliteration	3	(9)	5.7	(25)
Cumulative Pattern	1	(3)	6.4	(28)
Familiar Story	1	(4)	11	(48)
Familiar Sequence	1	(3)	7.5	(33)

feature might increase what would otherwise have been a low score. Anchor passages for each point were identified. (See Appendix B). Table 6 presents the results of the comparison between the old and the new series on features of predictability.

Over 50% of the selections in the new (1993) basals displayed such features as repeated patterns, rhyme, and rhythm, compared to less than 20% of the old (1986/87) basals. In addition, the new series were much more likely to have familiar concepts, cumulative patterns, familiar stories, familiar sequences, and a good match between text and illustrations. This suggests that the texts in the new series are much more predictable than those in the old. When examining overall predictability, we found the average rating for the old (1986/87) series was 1.52 (with a standard deviation of .60). The rating for the new (1993) series was 2.6 (with a standard deviation of 1.06). By these criteria, the selections in the new series are more predictable.

Decodability

A 5-point scale was used to rate the decoding demands placed on the reader at the word level (with 5 representing highly decodable vocabulary and 1 representing a low level of decodability — i.e., very demanding). Texts that were high on decodability consisted of common, one-syllable sight words, lots of redundancy, and few digraphs or vowel combinations. Texts that rated a 3 were characterized by one- and two-syllable words with some

Table 7. Predictability and Decodability Ratings for Early/Late Levels

	Early Level		Late Level	
	Predictability	Decodability	Predictability	Decodability
1986/87 Programs (N=42)				
$\bar{X}$	1.5	4.5	1.5	3.9
(SD)	(.55)	(4.6)	(.55)	(.57)
1993 Programs (Anthology only) (N=52)				
$\bar{X}$	3.1	3.2	1.9	2.8
(SD)	(1.0)	(1.0)	(.75)	(.85)

repetition. Texts rated low on decodability appeared to pay little attention to vocabulary control; three-syllable words were common. (See Appendix A). Anchor texts were selected for each point of the scale (See Appendix B for a list of texts). Raters evaluated every selection for decodability. The average decodability rating for the old (1986/87) series was 3.94 (with a standard deviation of .76). The average rating for the new (1993) series was 3.07 (with a standard deviation of .85). Thus, the new series place greater decoding demands on the reader than do the old.

To examine predictability and decodability in more detail, we specifically compared an early level and a later level in the programs, using the data from the second and next-to-last levels in each program (i.e., levels 2 and 4 in the 1986/87 programs and levels 2 and 5 in the 1993 programs). These data are presented in Table 7. This analysis suggests that the earliest levels of the programs show the greatest differences in predictability and decodability.

Summary of Findings from Pupil Editions

We found that the total number of words in the new (1993) programs is considerably less than in the old (1986/87) programs, but the new programs contain substantially more unique words than the old. The evidence suggests that vocabulary control and repetition has been significantly reduced if not abandoned in the new programs. In contrast to the old series, the adaptations of the literature in the new texts are minimal, and the content, language, and design of the new basals are more engaging than those of the old. In addition, the texts in the new series are substantially more predictable than those in the old series because they rely more

on features such as repeated patterns, rhyme, rhythm, and match of text and illustrations. These new texts are more demanding in terms of decoding than the old ones.

TEACHERS' EDITIONS

We analyzed the teachers' editions of the old (1986/87) and new (1993) programs using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Again, the intent was not to compare the programs with one another (see Aukerman, 1981), but rather to characterize the overall differences between the old and the new series. The qualitative analysis focused on ten important features of basal programs: (a) instructional design; (b) guided reading; (c) vocabulary; (d) questioning; (e) skills; (f) levels and pacing; (g) grouping; (h) entry; (i) assessment; and (j) tone. More details regarding these terms and their importance are provided under separate headings. Patterns were consistent across series with some exceptions.

Each teacher's edition was reviewed independently by at least one researcher who focused on the ten targeted features. The goal at this first stage was to describe what the series offered (in terms of rationale, activities, explanation, etc.) for each feature. At the second stage, researchers met in pairs (by series) to examine the similarities and differences between the old and new teachers' editions. The research teams summarized the comparative data for their series. At the third stage, the entire research team assembled as a group to discuss specific points of similarity and contrast between the old and the new *across* all series. Exceptions to the dominant patterns were also noted. The fourth and final stage involved two researchers cross-checking the findings by going back to the teachers' editions to substantiate patterns and look for disconfirming evidence. The findings are summarized in terms of the ten major features and examples from the series are provided.

Instructional Design

Instructional design refers to the overall organization and teaching emphasis of the teachers' editions. The instructional design of the old and new series differed markedly. The old series (1986/87) typically employ the pattern of (a) introducing a skill, (b) applying the skill in the reading of a specific selection, (c) checking comprehension/reteaching the skill, and (d) extending and enriching. For instance, the Houghton Mifflin series had the following components: (a) "Reading the Selection," emphasizing vocabulary and skills; (b) "Review and Enrichment," again emphasizing vocabulary and skills; and (c) "Skill Preparation," emphasizing additional skills and reteaching.

The new series (1993) call for variations on the theme of (a) engaging the reader, (b) having the reader read and respond to a selection several times with different purposes, and (c) encouraging the reader to explore the literature to develop skills and strategies. For instance, the Silver Burdett Ginn series engages the reader by developing concepts and vocabulary, such as *family*, as they relate to the story *Whose Mouse Are You?* Next, it suggests that the teacher read the story aloud, have students read along, and finally have the students read it independently. The teacher's edition then

suggests that students could make picture graphs illustrating how the mouse felt at the beginning of the story, the problems he encountered, and how he solved them. To develop the strategy of "recognizing elements of reality and fantasy," the teacher is to provide examples of both reality and fantasy from the book, ask students to compare these examples with other examples from the book, and then compare the elements students have differentiated with examples from other books.

> **Exception(s):** One of the new series, at the early stages of the first grade program, follows the "old" (1986-87) pattern of introducing a skill at the start and then applying it in the reading of the story. The pattern shifts after the first few levels to resemble the other new series in its instructional design.

Guided Reading

Guided reading refers to the instructional support provided by the teacher before, during, and after the reading of the selection. A directed reading activity, for instance, is a particular form of guided reading according to which the teacher provides students with background knowledge to comprehend the story, divides the story into smaller units for silent/oral reading, poses questions for the students to respond to after each segment, and finally guides the students in a discussion of the story (Betts, 1946; Hoffman, 1988).

The old (1986/87) series draw on a classical directed reading activity routine (Betts, 1946) with a focus on building background (i.e., concept development, vocabulary work); guided silent reading of the text in silent reading units (i.e., purpose setting, silent reading, follow-up questioning); and end of story discussion. The new (1993) series offer variations on a *shared reading model* (Holdaway, 1982) according to which the teacher reads the story aloud to the students (inviting and accepting responses); the teacher and students read the story together (to build fluency); and the students read the story again (and again) either independently, or in pairs, or in small groups (to build independence). Starting somewhere toward the middle of the first grade, the 1993 series begin to move away from the shared reading model (although it is still offered as an option for use with students in need of additional support) toward a guided reading model that encourages independent reading by the students.

> **Exception(s):** The new series differ with respect to when and how reliance on the shared reading model is reduced and finally eliminated. The series also differ with respect to the use of Big Books as part of the instructional design.

Vocabulary, Questioning, and Skills

Introducing new vocabulary, questioning about the story, and skills teaching are three features that have been used to characterize basal series (Aukerman, 1981). The older series tend to have teachers introduce vocabulary in isolation or provide a simple context before reading the selection, with the overall purpose of increasing students' ability to decode words. For

example, in one of the old (1986/87) series (i.e., Harcourt Brace Jovanovich's *The Little Red Lighthouse* in *Wishes*, pp. 88-95), the teacher is to write a list of the vocabulary words on the board. Next, the teacher uses the words in new sentences (not sentences from the story), and then asks the students to use the words in their own new sentences.

The new series use words from the stories in more meaningful contexts, stressing concept development more than decoding. For example, in Scott Foresman's development of vocabulary related to *The Foot Book* (*Hurry, Furry Feet*, pp. 10-29) the teacher is to write the words "one foot" inside the shape of a foot, and then add phrases from the book such as "two feet" or "more feet" while adding footprints. Some series provide creative activities connected to the vocabulary.

Questioning refers to the types and levels of questions the teacher asks to assess or extend students' comprehension. These questions can call for facts, inferences, main ideas, supporting details, or predictions (Aukerman, 1981). Although the old series offer literal questions on each page for the teacher to ask, the new series have fewer questions overall with a greater emphasis on inferential questions. The old series almost always provided specific answers for the teacher. The new series vary with respect to this practice — some provide specific answers while others rely more on the teacher's judgment. For instance, in the Silver Burdett Ginn series, the comprehension check for the story *Shoes from Grandpa* (*Morning Bells*, pp. 32-63) has the teacher ask the students to tell their favorite parts of the story or to think of another title for it. For the story *The Surprise* in the Houghton Mifflin series (*Bookworm*, pp. 52-75), the teacher is directed to ask the students to look at the illustrations and tell what kind of character Squirrel is.

Skills include the range of emphasis from decoding to comprehension to study skills (Aukerman, 1981). Attention to skills development dominates the old series with phonics prominently featured. The skills are often taught in isolation from the selections read in the series. For example, in Houghton Mifflin's old (1986/87) series, after the reading of the story *It Will Not Go* (*Bells*, pp. 11-16), the teacher prepares picture cards for students to identify beginning sounds in the words *jack-in-the box, pig, sock, vest, worm, yo-yo* — none of which appear in the story.

Skills remain a part of the new (1993) series, but the focus is on teaching skills within literature. Skills are more broadly defined, and some series differentiate between strategies (e.g., finding the author's purpose) and skills (e.g., finding the *ch* sound). For instance, in Houghton Mifflin's new teacher's edition, there are three major types of skills: comprehension, language patterns, and decoding. In the comprehension section of the story *Stone Soup* (*Bookworm*, Teacher's Edition, p. 83b), students are to discuss the elements and sequence of the story and learn to summarize. Finding language patterns involves rereading the story and identifying the repetition and rhythm of particular phrases. For the focus on decoding, students are to identify vowel pairs like *oo* which appear in words in the story such as *food*.

Overall, there is no less attention to skills in the new series than in the old. It appears to

be more a matter of how the skills/strategies are being taught (e.g., more contextualized/-connected to literature in the new series) and when (i.e., primarily after the reading of a selection in the new, not before, during, and after as in the old). No major exceptions to this pattern were noted.

Levels, Pacing, Entry, and Grouping

Because basals consist of ordered levels of text, both the number of levels and the pace at which texts are covered are important. The new basals did not differ from the old with regard to levels — other than the shift from five to six levels as demanded by the 1990 Texas proclamation. As noted in the analysis of pupil texts presented earlier, there is a clearer gradation of difficulty from one level to the next (insofar as readability formulas reflect these differences) in the old (1986/87) series than in the new (1993). The old series, for the most part, offered detailed pacing information. Some suggested weekly plans and even year-long plans to insure complete coverage. In contrast, the new series provide relatively little pacing information, leaving the timing of coverage of texts up to the teacher.

> **Exception:** One new (1993) series offers fairly detailed guidance for teachers on the pacing of students through the series.

Entry into the program is discussed in the old series in terms of student readiness. The concept of prerequisite skills is very strong in these series. The new series assume a much more developmentally oriented stance toward program entry. The concept of emergent literacy, of meeting children where they are in terms of their growth and needs, permeates the language of the new series.

Grouping refers to suggestions for how teachers should organize students for instruction. While the old series tended to support the use of ability groups (if not explicitly then tacitly) through directives such as "Once you have accurately determined each student's placement level, you can organize a manageable number of instructional groups" (Houghton Mifflin, Teacher's Edition, p. 16), the new series rely more heavily on a model of whole class instruction moving to flexible small groups or individuals. For example, Silver Burdett Ginn suggests the following: (a) independent reading: "Some children will want to explore a book on their own; (b) partner reading: "Two children can read a story together"; (c) small group reading: "Children who express interest in a particular book may be grouped together"; and (d) whole class reading: "Share a book with the entire group" (Teacher's Edition, *Morning Bells*, p. 11).

Assessment

While the emphasis in assessment in the old series is mostly on formal testing, the new series have moved to a portfolio approach, which combines observation of students and student inventories with the inclusion of samples of students' work. However, traditional tests are still available. Both the old and new series provide detailed information on how the objectives match (Texas) statewide assessment programs. No major exceptions to this pattern were noted.

Tone

Tone is a category that emerged from our analysis of the manuals. It refers to the way in which the instructional materials are presented to teachers. The old series tend to be directive in tone, providing explicit instructions about what to do, when, and how. The Houghton Mifflin series, for example, has in bold print with a blue "say" bar what the teacher should say to students. These directives are highly prescriptive and provide specific answers to literal and inferential questions. The Scott Foresman series, for example, in its "developing thinking skills" section following the story *Where is My Bear,* has the questions in bold and the answers in plain type, with the level of question (such as "inferential") in parentheses.

The tone of the new teachers' editions is slightly more suggestive than directive, with cued decision-making about which activities to do or questions to ask. For example, Macmillan/McGraw Hill has a section with each story called "Choices for Reading" that includes suggestions like the following: "If you choose to model comprehension strategies, then try this plan: You may want to read aloud to page 201 so that children understand the pattern of the selection" (*Sing a Sweet Song*, Teacher's Edition, p. 196H).

Although explicit modeling of think-alouds has, in many instances, replaced prescriptive language, the language remains quite explicit: "First, I'll reread the other words in the sentence. Then I'll try to think of a word that begins and ends with the right sounds and makes sense. The word *traced* begins with the right sounds and has the same ending but doesn't make sense. . ." (Houghton Mifflin, 1993, *Bookworm*, p. 155Q). Although the new teachers' editions seem to take a step toward considering the teacher as a thoughtful decision maker, the language and explicitness still strongly resemble the teacher-as-technician model of the older series. If the teachers' editions are considered on a continuum ranging from "a script to be followed" to "an available resource material," the new series have moved closer to the "available resource material" end, but without relinquishing significant control for instructional decision making to the individual teacher. No major exceptions to this pattern were noted.

Summary of Findings from Teachers' Editions

The new teachers' editions differ from the old in terms of their underlying instructional design, which replaces a directed reading model with a shared reading model. Vocabulary is introduced more in the context of the story in the new teacher's editions. Although fewer questions are presented, there is a noticeable attempt to include more higher level questions. The new basals focus less than the old on skills and isolated skills instruction, though skills are still prevalent. Features such as pacing, entry levels, and grouping differ from the old to the new. The new basals define assessment tools more broadly, in contrast to the testing-only mentality of the old series. The tone of the new manuals is less prescriptive than that of the old, moving in the direction of a teacher-as-decision-maker model.

CONCLUSION

Are the new basals significantly different from the old? Our analysis would suggest that — at least at the first grade level — the answer is yes. The literature for the new series is drawn almost exclusively from published children's literature with minimal changes in language and content. The pupil texts are more diverse in terms of format and organization (e.g., anthologies, Big Books, and trade books). The vocabulary is less stringently controlled and more demanding (in a decoding sense). The literature exhibits more engaging qualities and is more predictable. Finally, there is less in the way of intrusions on the literature in the pupil texts (e.g., skills pages). The programs (insofar as the teachers' editions reveal a philosophy and a pedagogy) are different in terms of their underlying instructional design. There is less concentration on phonics and isolated skills instruction in the new series. Suggested patterns for guided reading have been altered radically. And, finally, notions of assessment have been broadened considerably from a testing-only mentality.

These changes suggest that publishers are responding to a changing market place. Innovations are being offered on a scale unparalleled in the history of basals. Of particular notes is the fact that the general differences between the old and the new versions are far greater than variations between publishers.

Are these new versions better? Will developing readers become more engaged in learning as a result of the changes? How will students respond, for example, to the increased decoding demands? What kinds of changes in instruction will be associated with the new basals' adoption and use? Will teachers, for example, easily adopt and use the shared reading model for guided reading? How will teachers pace instruction without explicit guidance from the programs and without past traditions to fall back on? These are but a few of the more difficult yet ultimately more compelling questions for research to address. The new basals are still basals, and to many, therefore, they will continue to represent administrative mistrust of teachers and a mechanism to control and cover up for teachers' perceived inadequacies (see Goodman, Shannon, Freeman, & Murphy, 1988). To others, who perhaps take a less sinister view of schooling, the new basals may be seen as an enhanced resource for teachers, opening a new set of possibilities to help move their students along the path to literacy (see Wepner & Feeley, 1993). Regardless of one's stance on the issues, what is clear is that we are entering a time of intense experimentation in the teaching of literacy. What will be the effect? The imperative is to examine this experience carefully so we can learn from it.

Notes

[1] One of the authors of this paper and co-director of the research project is an author for one of the basal programs included in the analysis. No portion of the research was supported by any publisher. Four publishers did provide copies of their materials for this review. We gratefully acknowledge their cooperation.

[2] Our focus on first grade is based on an overarching goal of studying changes in beginning

reading instruction associated with the adoption of more literature-based basal reading programs. This overarching research effort (entitled: First Grade Reading Instruction: Teachers and Students in Transition) involves the study of sixteen first grade teachers and their students over a three year period. The study is supported by a grant from the National Reading Research Center.

[3] We selected the 1986/87 series as the point of comparison because these were the programs under adoption in the state of Texas. We are aware that most of the publishers included in this study have published programs since the 1986/87 editions. Analyses of these programs (e.g., Wepner & Feeley, 1993) suggest that changes associated with the California state adoption in 1989 had already set in motion some of the changes featured in the 1993 versions.

[4] A validation study of our ratings involving interviews with kindergarten, first, and second grade students was reported by Sarah McCarthey in "Strange Interlude or True Romance: Engaging the New Basal Readers" at the 1993 meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Atlanta, GA.

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INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS STUDIED

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc. (1987)
HBJ Reading Program
Orlando, FL

Book Titles: *New Friends*
Mortimer Frog
Mr. Fig
Wishes
Smiles

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc. (1993)
Treasury of Literature.
Orlando, FL

Book Titles: *At My Window*
A Friend Like You
Across the Fields
Let's Shake On It!
The Deep Blue Sea
Sliver of the Moon

Houghton Mifflin (1986)
Houghton Mifflin Reading
Boston, MA

Book Titles: *Bells*
Drums
Trumpets
Parades
All Together

Houghton Mifflin (1993)
The Literature Experience
Boston, MA.

Book Titles: *Me, Myself and I*
Too Big
Dream a Story
Bears Don't Go to School
With a Crash and a Bang
Bookworm

Macmillan (1987)
Connections
New York, NY

Book Titles: *Close to Home*
Stepping Out
Moving On
Taking Time
Look Again

Macmillan/McGraw-Hill (1993)
A New View
New York, NY

Book Titles: *Books! Books! Books!*
Hear We Grow
Goodness Gracious Me!
Sing a Sweet Song
The Very Thing
Trade Book Package

Scott, Foresman & Co. (1987)
Scott Foresman Reading
Glenview, IL

Book Titles: *Friends*
Prizes
Colors
Outside My Window
Story Clouds

Silver Burdett Ginn (1993)
New Dimensions in the World of Reading
Needham, MA

Book Titles: *Here Comes the Band*
All Through the Town
Out Came the Sun
Morning Bells
Make a Wish
A New Day

Scott, Foresman & Co. (1993)
Celebrate Reading
Glenview, IL

Book Titles: *Under My Hat*
Hurry, Furry Feet
Our Singing Planet
My Favorite Foodles
Happy Faces
A Canary with Hiccups

APPENDIX A

RATING SCALES

1. Content (What the author has to say) will be rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (very low) to 5 (very high).

Overarching Questions:

Are the ideas important?
Are the ideas personally, socially, or culturally relevant?
Is there development of an idea, character, or theme?
Does the text stimulate thinking and feeling?

Rating Scale

5 A level 5 text is characterized by the expression of significant and worthwhile ideas. In narrative texts themes may be multiple, complex, and socially relevant--never didactic or trite. In expository texts, concepts tend to be abstract rather than concrete. The ideas are of high personal or social relevance or create situations that are socially complex. Level 5 texts are characterized by a high degree of development of characters, ideas, or themes. In the case of a narrative, characters are complex, may change, and may have a heightened awareness of themselves or their environment. Multiple problems may present themselves in the plot or unexpected twists of story line may occur. Tension may be created by suspense within the plot or a complex text structure. Poetic or expository texts may express the development of an idea through rhyme or complexity of ideas. Level 5 texts stimulate the reader to think about issues and/or evoke strong emotions. For instance, an expository text may include unusual contrasts and rich examples to stimulate thinking. Level 5 texts require interpretation by the reader and lend themselves easily to more than one interpretation.

4 A level 4 text is characterized by the expression of relatively important ideas either in terms of personal or social relevance. More than one theme may be present in narrative texts; often themes depict characters in complex social relationships. Some development of a concept in the case of expository text, or of character or events in narrative texts takes place. Story lines or concept development may be somewhat unpredictable. There may be some juxtaposition of unusual, even contradictory ideas in poetic, narrative or expository texts. Level 4 texts can support more than one interpretation by the reader. Level 4 texts have the potential to evoke a moderate emotional and/or intellectual response.

3 A level 3 text is characterized by the expression of an idea, theme, or situation. In the case of narrative, themes or messages exist, but may be didactic in nature. Situations are either realistic or provide opportunities for many students to relate and ideas may have some social relevance or import. Expository or poetic texts usually deal with concrete topics (e.g., guinea pigs) rather than

complex ideas. Level 3 texts indicate some degree of development of an idea or character. In narrative, characters may experience conflict, but often the problem is solved. Some tension may be evident through the use of rhyme or suspense in relation to events. There is often character development or increased revelation of the character's thoughts or emotions. Expository texts may include interesting examples, use of comparison or contrast, or description to delineate an idea. Plots or idea development are straightforward without much complexity, yet some interpretation may be required on the part of the reader. Level 3 texts should evoke some intellectual or emotional response by the reader.

2 A level 2 text may include an idea, theme, or concept, but it is underdeveloped or lacking in social relevance. Situations in narratives may seem contextually inappropriate or verging on stereotypical, while concepts in expository text, when present, lack depth. In narratives, some problem may exist, but it is resolved in a predictable, often unrealistic way. Characters lack dimensionality. Expository texts often depict mundane topics and tend to be much more concrete rather than abstract. Level 2 texts do not provide many opportunities to engage the reader intellectually or affectively. Little interpretation is required of the reader; most features of the story line or concept are explicit, even didactic.

1 A level one text lacks evidence of any important, socially relevant, or worthwhile idea. A central message, theme, or concept is missing or undeveloped. Situations are usually artificial; many students may have difficulty relating to them. In the case of narrative, there is little conflict or dramatic tension. Characters are flat, interchangeable with one another, and/or stereotypical. There is little development of a concept or character. Expository texts lack useful examples, fail to provide comparisons or contrasts, or fail to provide accurate information. These texts provide few opportunities for the stimulation of thinking or feeling. No interpretation is required because each aspect of the plot or idea is explicit and concrete.

II. **Language** will be rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (very low) to 5 (very high).

Overarching Questions:

Is the language rich in literary quality?
Is the vocabulary appropriate but challenging?
Is the writing clear?
Is the text easy and fun to read aloud?
Does the text lend itself to oral interpretation?

Rating Scale

5 A level 5 text is characterized by language which calls attention to itself in a positive way through the stylized use of words and expressions that are unusual, idiomatic, and/or metaphoric. Causal, sequential and associative connections among propositions may be multiple and suggest multiple

interpretations. Compound or complex sentences may be present. Dialogue is idiomatic and/or colloquial.

4 A level 4 text is characterized by the literate quality of its language. It is more than just talk written down in terms of syntactic complexity, word choice, and expressions. Connections among propositions may be patterned, and sentence syntax is formally composed and often stylized. Where uncommon vocabulary is present, it may generally reoccur as a part of the discourse pattern. The language may exhibit playful qualities in its use of rhyme, repeated words/phrases, or the predictability/regularity of its story line. The text, when read aloud, invites oral interpretation.

3 A level 3 text is characterized by language which is simple but meaningful. It may contain rhyme and the repetition of phrases. Propositions may be formulaic, linked as comparisons and contrasts, or linked in simple sentences. The expression of meaning guides word selection, although words may be monosyllabic and common. Dialogue may resemble standard American speech. When read aloud, the text lends itself to a conversational tone.

2 A level 2 text is characterized by the simplistic quality of its language. The relating of events is straightforward; connections among propositions are largely explicit or not unusual and suggest one interpretation. Sentences may be either syntactically simple or regular in their construction. Vocabulary is relatively simple, although there may be an occasional specialized or unusual word; expressions and figures of speech may be ordinary. The text is difficult to read aloud with expression.

1 A level one text is characterized by language that is redundant and stilted. Sentence syntax is formally grammatical, but contains constructions that native literates would not normally speak or write. Connections among propositions are obvious, but may be artificial. It is difficult to relate to the prosodic features of the text language.

III. **Design** will be rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (very low) to 5 (very high).

Overarching Questions:

Do the illustrations/art enrich and extend the text?
Is the use of design creative and attractive?
Is there creative/innovative use of print?

Rating Scale

5 The design (e.g., layout; formatting; use of media; use of line, color, shape and texture) are aesthetically pleasing. The design has a life of its own. It calls attention to itself for its beauty and creativity. The illustrations evoke multiple images. When revisited, new interpretations or detail are noticed. The design is likely to provoke comments from the reader.

4 The design extends the text. It goes beyond the literal into the interpretive. The design represents the mood or texture. The design is so compatible with the text that it does not draw attention to itself independent of the content and language. The reader is likely to draw on the illustrations in discussing and interpreting the story.

3 The design is functional. It may be attractive, but does not extend the text. It represents the ideas of the text, but does not take the reader very far beyond the literal level of response.

2 The design of the text is either incidental or artificial. What there is in the way of a design appears to be more of an add-on than an effort to provide a significant counterpoint/complement to the content and language.

1 There is little offered in the way of design that commands attention. What there is in terms of design only detracts from the text. The design is either unappealing or 'ugly'.

IV. **Predictability** will be rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (very low) to 5 (very high).

Overarching Questions:

Does the structure of the text language enable the reader to predict not only what action will occur but what words will come up next?

Does the structure of the text language enable the reader to "re-read" with some degree of accuracy and expression once it has been read to him/her?

Rating Scale

5 Highly predictable text. Uses multiple features to achieve this degree of predictability. Emergent readers could give a fairly close to actual text reading after only a few exposures to the story.

4 Very predictable text. Uses three or more features to achieve this degree of predictability. With many parts/sections of the story and emergent reader could give a fairly close to actual text reading after only a few exposures to the story.

3 Obvious attention to predictable features. The author tends to rely on one or two features quite heavily. Emergent readers could likely make some predictions of the text language in a few parts of the text.

2 Some minimal attention to predictability, achieved primarily through word repetition. Perhaps there

is a single repeated word or short phrase that an emergent reader may be able to join in on after several exposures.

1 No evidence of predictable characteristics.

V. **Decodability** will be rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (very low) to 5 (very high).

Overarching Questions:

What decoding demands does the text language (at the "isolated" word level place on the reader?

Rating Scale

We rate text on a 5-point scale ranging from most decodable (5) to least decodable (1).

5 Mostly common sight words. Lots of redundancy. Few digraphs or vowel combinations.

4 Common sight words mixed with lots of monosyllabic regular (decodable vocabulary).The text is characterized by repetition of words. Some simple compound words with a few contractions.

3 Characterized by one and two syllable words. Word repetition is still in evidence. Three syllable words and beyond are high frequency or easily decoded or strongly cued by the context (sentence or picture). Word endings are mostly inflectional in form.

2 Little obvious attention to vocabulary control and repetition, although most of the vocabulary are still in the one and two syllable range. Increased use of derivational affixes. Some infrequent words, but not characterized by unusual vocabulary.

1 No apparent attention to vocabulary control. Two and three syllable words are common. There is a full range of derivational and inflectional affixes.

APPENDIX B

EXEMPLAR TEXTS

■ CONTENT

level 5 "Baby Rattlesnake" by Te Ata in *The Very Thing*, Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, 1993.

level 4 "The Trek" by Ann Jonas in *Sing a Sweet Song*, Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, 1993.

level 3 "Guinea Pigs Don't Read Books" by Colleen Stanley Bare in *The Very Thing*, Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, 1993.

level 2 "Doghouse for Sale" by Donna Lugg Pape in *Parades*, Houghton Mifflin, 1986.

level 1 "Have You Seen My Cat?" by Eric Carle in *Here Comes the Band*, Silver Burdett Ginn, 1993.

■ LANGUAGE

level 5 "Chitina and Her Cat" by Mont Serrat del Amo in *With a Crash and a Bang*, Houghton Mifflin, 1993.

level 4 "Jimmy Lee Did It" by Pat Cummings in *Sing a Sweet Song*, Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, 1993.

level 3 "Whose Baby?" by Masayuki Yabuuchi in *Here We Grow*, Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, 1993.

level 2 "Who Took the Farmer's Hat" by Joan Nodset in *Make a Wish*, Silver Burdett and Ginn, 1993.

level 1 "Joe and Mom Paint" in *Colors*, Scott Foresman, 1987.

■ DESIGN

level 5 "The Story of Chicken Lickin'" by Jan Ormerod in *Goodness Gracious Me!* Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, 1993.

level 4 "School Days" by B. G. Hennessy in *Dream a Story*, Houghton Mifflin, 1993.

level 3 "I Wish I Could Fly" by Ron Marris in *Too Big*, Houghton Mifflin, 1993.

level 2 "A Food Sale" by Argentina Palacios in *Look Again*, MacMillan, 1986.

level 1 "A Wish is Quite a Tiny Thing" by Annette Whynne in *Wishes*, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich 1987.

■ PREDICTABILITY

level 5 "Chicka Chicka Boom Boom" by Bill Martin and John Archambault, in *Morning Bells*, Silver Burdett Ginn, 1993.

level 4 "The Mulberry Bush," traditional, in *Bears Don't Go*, Houghton Mifflin, 1993.

level 3 "The Little Red Hen" in *Parades*, Houghton Mifflin, 1986.

level 2 "Worlds I Know" by Myra Livingston, in *A New Day*, Silver Burdett Ginn, 1993.

level 1 "Do Not Take This Tree" in *Outside My Window*, Scott Foresman, 1987.

■ DECODABILITY

level 5 "Tiny" in *Bells*, Houghton Mifflin, 1986.

level 4 "A Day to Forget," by Joan Lynn Carbonali, in *Trumpets*, Houghton Mifflin, 1986.

level 3 "Sophie and Jack Help Out" by Judy Taylor, in *Bears Don't Go*, Houghton Mifflin, 1993.

level 2 "Two Friends" in *A New Day*, Silver Burdett Ginn, 1993.

level 1 "Carry Go Bring Come," by Vyanne Samuels, in *Bookworm*, Houghton Mifflin, 1993.

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